

City of Fulton

City Council Meeting Minutes

January 31, 2022

Mayor Wendy Ottens called the meeting to order and directed the Clerk to call the roll. On roll call, Alderpersons Hunt, Nederhoff, Banker, VanKampen, King, Brondyke, and VanZuiden were present. Alderperson Mask was absent. Staff included City Treasurer Fosdick, Administrator Clark, Chief Neblung, and PW Director Sikkema. Visitors were present.

PRESENTATION

Dr. Lori Cortez gave an updated presentation on the SVCC Impact Program, which is an earned tuition program offered to area high school students. Students in the program are registered for the program their freshman year and are required to participate with 100 hours of community service before their high school graduation. They must apply for at least one other local/state/or national scholarship, and complete the FASA. While they are attending Sauk they must maintain a 2.0 GPA, be enrolled in a certificate, degree or transfer program, and must also participate in an additional 25 hours of community service per year. These requirements make them eligible for earn tuition and fees for up to three years at SVCC.

At this time the college is asking all residents, the city, and businesses to consider donations to keep the program financially sound for future generations.

BUSINESS

Approve the January 8, 2022, Council minutes. Alderman VanKampen motioned, seconded by Alderman Brondyke. No discussion to follow. Roll call vote, 7 yes, 0 no, minutes approved.

Approve the December 2021, Treasurer's Report. Alderman VanZuiden motioned, seconded by Alderman King. No discussion to follow. Roll call vote, 7 yes 0 no, Treasurer's report approved.

Approve the January 2022 Bill List. Alderman King motioned, seconded by Alderman Hunt. No discussion to follow. Roll call vote, 7 yes, 0 no, bill list approved.

Approve the License Agreement, Coop Agreement and to give the City Administrator the authority to agree on "The Right of Way Terms". Alderman King motioned, seconded by Alderman Hunt. No discussion to follow. Roll call vote 7, yes 0 no, motion approved.

Approve Resolution of Support for the Robert Eagle (Abbott-Eagle Addition) of which lie within the corporate limits of one and one-half mile of the City of Fulton, IL. Alderman VanZuiden motioned, seconded by Alderman King. City Administrator Clark reiterated that this is a request of support that the county would like to have on their records as standard procedure. No further discussion. Roll call vote, 7 yes 0 no. Resolution approved.

Approve funding for the Downtown Revitalization engineering fees. Fee of \$10,675.55 will include cost estimates, downtown street improvement plans, grant application, grant narratives, grant exhibits and will

also include the administration of the grant itself. Funding for the fees will be taken from Fund 65. Alderman VanZuiden motioned, seconded by Alderman King. Short discussion to follow. City Administrator Clark stated that the grant being applied for was in the amount of approximately \$3 million dollars. There is no matching amounts for the City. Alderman VanZuiden asked if it would be Community Funding and Planning Services (Dan, Sharon and Jill Pepin) administrating the grant. Administrator Clark said no, the engineering firm of Willett Hofmann will be the administrators, as they are very experienced with this particular type of grant. No further discussion. Roll call vote, 7 yes 0 no. Approved funding.

Approve Resolution of Support for the IDOT, ADA Sidewalk Project on 14th Ave. Alderman Hunt motioned, Alderman VanKampen seconded. City Administrator Clark said that this was an IDOT project with no matching funding from the city. No further discussion. Roll call vote, 7 yes 0 no. Resolution approved.

DISCUSSION. Moving Forward on Council salaries. Discuss increase in salaries for the upcoming fiscal year.

City Administrator Clark stated that as of now, the Mayor is receiving \$293.75 per one meeting per month, Aldermen receive \$106.25 per one meeting per month and the Clerk receiving \$262.50 per one meeting per month. All officials are entitled to an additional \$31.25 on top of their base pay for additional meetings, whether it be entire council or committee meetings. It was the consensus of the council for the administrator to inquire what another local community is paying for their elected officials. Administrator Clark said he would be happy to inquire.

Council pay has not been increased since the year 2000.

Mayor Wendy stated that she definitely would like to see an increase for the Mayor's position due to all the meetings, committees, social media projects, and tourism interests that she is involved in. Alderman VanZuiden stated that the entire council works just as hard as the Mayor's position and should be discussed further at the budget meeting. All in agreement. City Administrator Clark asked that they come up with ideas for the budget workshop to be held on February 12, 2022.

DISCUSSION. Moving forward with the American Recuse Plan, employee bonus.

Alderman King and Alderman Hunt very much for the employee bonus, stating those that were here during the COVID pandemic (2020 and into early 2021) should be rewarded for their extra efforts. Administrator Clark will compile the list of employees, that were actively working at this time and bring up at the budget workshop.

DISCUSSION. Moving forward with eliminating the ball diamonds at Kiwanis Park and adding an additional diamond at Drive's Park.

Alderman VanKampen stated that all were in favor at the Kiwanis meeting on the move. She also stated that she was initially opposed to the closing of Kiwanis Park, but after witnessing a near accident with children, she now supports the move.

Alderman Hunt, opposes the move due to the fact that the local convenience store will lose much business.

Mayor Wendy supports the move for the fact all diamonds will be together and better access for parents with more than one child, and also will make the land available for sale. Hoping to bring in a business that will support employment opportunities and sales tax for the city.

City Administrator Clark said that the public should be involved with the decision. Chief Neblung said that a survey could be arranged in the same format that they have used for the Police Department.

Alderman VanZuiden said that maybe to get in touch with the Rec League and pass out a survey sheet when the families sign their children up for the athletic leagues.

Alderman Nederhoff stated that this discussion has come up before and parents were not in favor with the move.

It was decided that more information is needed. Further discussion will take place at budget meeting and future council meeting.

REPORTS

Finance – Alderman Nederhoff stated that himself, City Administrator Clark and Mayor Wendy met in December, Alderman VanZuiden was not present. Basically went over the current budget to actual. Everything was in line with projections.

Economic Development – Report included in packet

Parks and Recs – Alderman VanKampen will call for a committee meeting on February 10th at 4:00 pm.

Public Safety – Alderman Banker addressed the council with a potential idea for expansion to the police department for a climate controlled area for the squad cars and possible area for impoundment. He and Chief Neblung had an appointment to see property located at 800 20th Ave. (Former Visual Imaging Bldg.). It is currently for sale for \$359,000. The building is approximately 7,200 square feet and would be able to house cars and confiscated property.

Chief Neblung was asked if in the future it was being contemplated to move the Police Department Offices to this building. He said not at this time as there would have to be office remodeling done. But possibly in the future.

Alderman VanZuiden asked where is the funding to come from. Alderman Banker stated that it should definitely be funding itself. Further information will have to be compiled on what the revenue side will be with fines and impoundment fees.

The council gave their permission to get further information. Alderman Banker and Chief Neblung both stated that this would have to be a rather quick turnaround, due to someone else also may be wanted to purchase the building.

Further discussion will take place at the February 12, 2022 meeting.

Marina – Alderman VanKampen stated that the committee met and discussed rates and upcoming improvements. She will come to the council with the final report after the next marina meeting on February 17, 2022.

Zoning – N/A

MAYOR'S REPORT – Mayor Wendy gave a oral report. She stated that there needs to be a better line of communication with all involved, whether it be administrator, council or employees.

She stated that she has at least half of her business for sale so that she can free up time to give both her business and her Mayoral duties more attention, and to move forward in a positive direction.

A tourism director is definitely something that she will continue to push forward with. This is a position that is a must! There is too much at stake here. Tourism should be the driving force for our town, we have much to offer. "This can not be overlooked." She feels that she is being taken advantage and asked who else on the council will do this? Alderman VanKampen does agree that there should be a tourism director, and Alderman VanZuiden, stated he is not opposed but once again how are we going to fund the position. Something else will have to be eliminated.

Mayor Wendy would like to appoint a "Committee of the Whole", to establish the duties of a city administrator. This will be helpful when it comes time to replace Administrator Clark when he retires. "If we make a plan now, this will save valuable time when it comes to replace him."

Mayor Wendy also would like to make it clear that she is the "Official Liquor Commissioner." She is tired of the prejudice of the council in making decisions who gets liquor licenses and who does not. The Mayor stated she is in full support of bringing businesses to Fulton, "I'm all for it, and let it sit on your shoulders if you continue to say, no." Would recommend a \$5000 initial fee for a liquor license if you are a first time business in Fulton. We can not limit the number of licenses.

Alderman VanZuiden states the he too has the best interest for the City and feels that he and the council is being called out by the Mayor. He states that the entire council works just as hard as the Mayoral position and resents the repour of this report! He will never support the unlimited number of liquor licenses and your approach needs to be different. Mayor Wendy states that she is sorry he feels this way.

Alderman King agrees with Alderman VanZuiden.

Alderman Hunt will discuss his opinions at a later opportunity.

ALDERMAN REPORTS

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT – Included

CHIEF OF POLICE REPORT – Included (Yearly report). All of the Council appreciates the yearly report, stating this is the most conclusive and informative report that has been presented to them.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR – Included

FULTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY – Included

INFORMATION ONLY

Mayor Wendy said she has good news to report as for the sale of property located in the Fulton Industrial Center.

Dan Dolan would like to purchase an additional 12 acres on top of the previous "option to buy (18 acres).

She states that she has an agreement of purchase, that just needs to be approved, but of course can not tonight, but would like to at the next meeting.

Alderman VanZuiden would like to know who negotiated the price?

Mayor Wendy said this would just be a continuation of the current contract, which states \$10,640 per acre. The Mayor tells the council that the additional acreage would be possibly used for a solar plant to support the cannabis grow facility that he had initially proposed for the first 18.73 acres. Dolan would take the extra land due to the fact that the previous administration had failed to state about the proposed road that would go through the existing property that was to be purchased.

Alderman Banker asked what some of the previous sales had been to other individuals in the Industrial Center. City Administrator Clark stated that he would compile that information for the council for the next meeting. Alderman Banker also wanted clarification on what money was put down to hold the initial property.

Alderman Nederhoff stated that the city has given multiple extensions on this purchase agreement with no money down, and he is still getting it at the same price of the initial contract until this extension ends.

City Administrator Clark said he informed Mayor Wendy, last week, that the contract ended on January 15, 2022. Well than, several Alderman stated that negotiations should start anew.

Mayor Wendy was worried about Fulton's good name, if we didn't give an extension of time past the January 15th expiration. She stated, "She thought the cash sale in the amount of \$319,000 would be good news."

It came to the conclusion that much more information and discussion would have to take place at future meetings.

ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL AND PENDING LITIGATION

Alderman VanZuiden motioned, seconded by Alderman King, Roll call vote, 7 yes 0 no. Council adjourned to closed session at 7:00 p.m.

RETURNED TO REGULAR MEETING

Council returned to regular meeting at 7:06 p.m.

ADJOURN TO CONINUATION MEETING ON FEBRUARY 12, 2022 AT 8:00 am

Alderman King motioned, seconded by Alderman VanZuiden. All in favor. 7 yes, 0 no. Motion approved. Meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tammy L Garibay
City Clerk